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## PRESS RELEASE

### **Awards for the Best Court Public Information Officers**

Judge Antoaneta Dimovska from Basic Court Skopje 2, Judge Vladimir Tufegdžic from Basic Court Skopje 1 and the President of the Supreme Court, Jovo Vangelovski, are winners of the 2010 Award for the Best Public Information Officer of the Courts in Macedonia from the USAID Judicial Reform Implementation Project.

In an award ceremony on January 26, USAID Mission Director Michael Fritz presented the award to the winners and congratulated them for their work. "Court transparency and openness are key to fostering greater citizen confidence in the judiciary," said Mr. Fritz. "Because citizens pay the taxes that sustain the judicial system, they have the right to know and monitor court operations and performance."

The selection committee, which included prominent journalists, public relation professionals and representatives of the judiciary, selected the three winners to honor their contribution in opening their courts to the public. These judges made significant changes in opening their courts through transparent communication with the public, organizing public events, informing the public about their work, responding to media inquiries.

The USAID Judicial Reform Implementation Project is helping the judiciary to develop into a stronger, more effective and independent branch of government. It works to improve the functioning of the courts and effect structural changes mandated by recent legislative reform and necessitated by the introduction of modern court administration practices. The Project strengthened the capacities of the Public Information Officers of the courts by providing series of trainings, mentoring and technical assistance to improve court openness and transparency.

#### **NOTE TO EDITORS:**

The American people, through USAID, have invested nearly \$500 million in Macedonia since 1993. USAID is implementing projects that create jobs, reduce corruption, and prepare Macedonian students for the workforce. These initiatives improve the quality of life and support Macedonia's transition to a stable and prosperous democracy. USAID provides economic and humanitarian assistance in more than 100 countries. For more information please visit <http://macedonia.usaid.gov>.